



# Materials Safety

## Importance of Reporting of “Near Misses”

*A Message from Rick Kelly*



**“Near misses” are a great learning tool—they should be discussed, and action should be taken to avoid a repetition that actually causes an injury.**

*—Paul Alvisatos,  
Division Director*

### Incident:

Recently, an MSD employee working on the UC Berkeley campus was injured when a gas cylinder fell on his foot, breaking two toes. The injury occurred during the transportation of gas cylinders using a cylinder cart that lacked essential safety features, including the ability individually restrain cylinders one at a time. This cart was available for use to several hundred people in the chemistry complex.

### Review:

**On several occasions in the past, the injured employee had barely escaped injury when a cylinder fell from this poorly designed cart. MORE IMPORTANTLY, he should have reported the incident, let others in the lab know about the hazard, and replaced the cart or modified it appropriately. Near misses are counted as accidents and those who report them are praised, not criticized.**

This recent example highlights the importance of reporting “near misses”, incidents that nearly result in injuries. Had this issue been raised previously, the cart would have been repaired or removed from service and the injury would not have occurred.

### Actions:

Please report all LBNL or campus near misses to Rick Kelly (rjkelly@lbl.gov, 457-8452). For incidents on campus, please concurrently notify to the EH&S Office (642-3073).

The UCB Lessons Learned report on this incident can be read at <http://ehs.berkeley.edu/lessonslearned/labslessons7.html>

